

Toward Prosperity

Offshore/Onshore Technologies Association of Nova Scotia (OTANS)

Consultation

June 28th, 2000

Discussion:

Strategy/Discussion Paper:

- The document is too basic, superficial. It needs to go deeper, be more aggressive. At the moment it is a feel good document.
- pg 21 - We don't do enough to advertise the opportunities in Guysborough, if anyone should get funding, it is them.
- pg 9 - "government knows...revenues."
 - Makes it sound like government will keep taking more in revenues.
 - If we have a clear direction/strategy then should reach a point when don't need more money.
- The Strategy should contain a taxation strategy.
- Two best industries: (1) Oil and Gas
(2) Knowledge-based
- Need a framework governing this sector.
- Don't have an energy policy.

Role of Government:

- Government's chief role is regulation - that should work well and consistently.
- At present government is too involved.
- Public-Private Partnerships are the way to go if there is limited money.
- Need consistency in the Department of Economic Development.
 - Politicians are too quick to attack the Department of Economic Development.
 - Leadership will not come from the politicians, it will have to be the Economic Development..
- Department of Economic Development - must set up a clear, defined business climate.
 - Focus on regulation, taxes
 - At present there are 3 departments regulating oil and gas.
 - The different arms of government need to work together.
 - Need a clear direction and be reconciled to the fact that not everyone will like the result.
 - Need a framework to allow them to function in an efficient, unhindered way.
 - Leaders need to be willing to take the heat for decisions and to take a stand.
 - None of the politicians or even bureaucrats have done so as yet. Ex:
George's Bank.
 - Need to be committed to grow.

- Should have all people from all department responsible for marketing under one roof (DED) so as to control and coordinate efforts.
- Don't have a good enough idea of what we have to offer, where we are. First need to be clear on that and then can decide where we want to go from here.
- Must stop politicking.
- Need a balance between regulating and promoting -conflict of interest.
- If Labour Market Development Secretariat doesn't have a clear role as yet - why do we need it?
- There are a lot of success stories that politicians aren't promoting.
- Government needs to pick the industries that it will support and then give them its full attention.
 - Ex: Norway - before oil and gas it was just "a rock with people on it"
 - Oil and Gas is the *one* industry we should focus on.
- The Advisory Council on Energy is a good step but needs to act fast.
- Often it isn't money that business needs from government, just contacts and introductions to key people.
- Need a level of commitment where there is no question that government is behind oil and gas.
- Often just need to listen and be seen to be listening and supporting the industry.
- Shouldn't have arm's length, independent structures for this. Need to appoint someone to the Board who knows the oil and gas industry and will back government's policies on the issues.

Regulatory Climate:

- There is too much duplication with regulations.
- Regulations themselves are not bad, but there is poor implementation.
- The bar is set too high in the environmental regulations.
 - We are scaring people/business away.
 - Are over-regulating ourselves.
- Government has maintained an inconsistent approach to the fish and oil industries.
 - Have been unwilling to decide/make choices.
 - Need clearer regulations to support these industries.
- The Nova Scotia economy has always been grounded in the natural resources. Oil and gas is one of these resources.